THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE SEATTLE AREA TIMEX USERS GROUP

SWYM

AUGUST 1989

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CHUCK KERELUCK

>>POSTINGS<<

NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 3,1989
THURSDAY 7:30pm

Address: 8517 35th Av.NE
University
Federal Savings
Bank

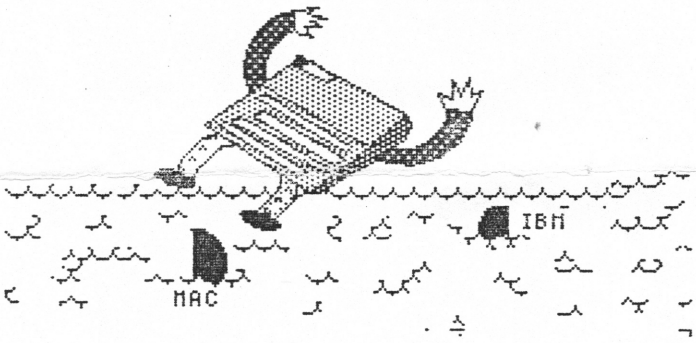
NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT:

DUES-It has been brought to the editors' attention that there are some SEATUG members who are dreadfully behind in their dues. 'Nuf said!

SPECIAL THANKS:
The editors of this month's issue would like to extend their thanks to the following people who made it possible to be able to publish this newsletter entirely on the Timex/Sinclair 2068 computer, FDD 3000 disk system, Memotech DMX80 printer, using Pixel Print Professional Desktop Publishing Software:

Stan Lemke-Pixel Print software
Mike Finn -FDD 3000 s/w mods.
Bill Ferrebee-Fonts and Icons
Steve Spaulding-Masthead/Borders
David Hildebrand-32K EXRAM board

SWYM'S COVER GIRL FOR AUGUST



News from Around the Clubs

From "The Hacker":
This is the newsletter put out by the Timex/Sinclair User Group of Las Vegas. They are very big on graphics, publishing one of the best looking newsletters around. From the looks of the samples we've been getting, every copy is an "original", i.e., no xeroxing. The only issue available for review was the December 1988 one. In it, was news about QLs, the shutdown of the RMG BBS Z88s, COMDEX computer fair and the Amstrad PC500. This appears to be a very news-oriented newsletter. Maybe we can start getting current issues, again? They really do a bang-up job.

From "CRAGIST Newsletter":
"CRAGIST" stands for Cedar Rapids And Greater Iowa Sinclair Timex. This group publishes a very interesting newsletter, with just a smattering of graphics. The copies available for review were the Febuary 1989 and the March/April '89 issues. Repair procedures for disk drives are detailed, as well as constructin projects for a cassette tape loading aid and program-length tapes. Hand-drawn diagrams are always supplied. Input from other clubs are sometimes received, too, such as the disk drive technical data supplied by Tony Willing of VISTA.

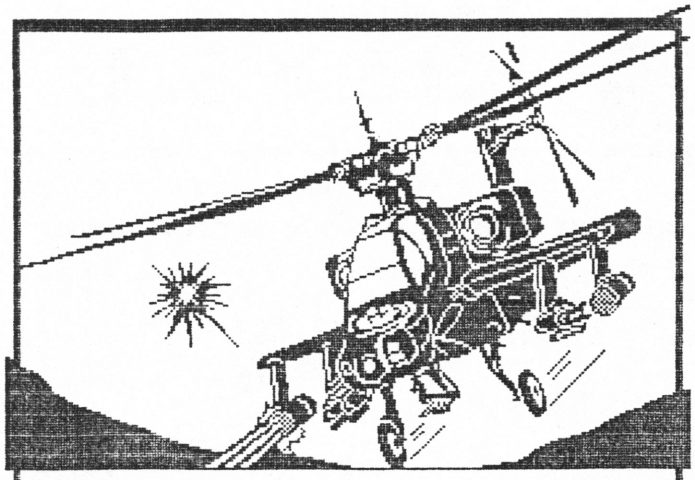
From "SWYM":
The Seattle Area Timex Users Group (SEATUG) debuted their back up newsletter publishing station by publishing the first issue of SWYM in Pixel Print Professional Desktop Publishing Software.
It is reported that the effort was done entirely using the 2068 computer. The masthead and mailers were still laser printed however. Big Blue was rumoured to have been standing aghast in the shadows, but this has not been confirmed.
It looks like a winner.

WANT ADS

Send your notices to:
"SWYM ADS"
9013 32nd Ave NE
Seattle, WA 98115
or call
206-523-5272

WANTED =
Aerco printer interface for the TS2068. With docs. Call 523-5272

WANTED =
Your ad in this space.



TIRED OF FIGHTING THAT MS-DOS JUNGLE?

Return to the

SIMPLE life.

SUPPORT AND USE

TIMEX SINCLAIR COMPUTERS

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Be sure to support SWYM, too!
Hey you late-payers...
COME ON!!

TECHNICAL TALK-NOTES-DIAGRAMS-DATA-SUGGESTIONS-INFORMATION...

Random Bits

TECHNICAL TALK-NOTES-DIAGRAMS-DATA-SUGGESTIONS-INFORMATION...

by Chuck Kereluck

BACKUP PUBLISHING STATION DEBUT

Please welcome the first issue of SWYM published with Pixel Print Desktop Publishing software!! This is a combined effort of Robert and myself to instigate a backup newsletter publishing station in the event that our Editor-in-Chief cannot meet the deadline, for whatever reason. Every piece of resource used is Timex-Sinclair based.

All Pixel Print hardware and software is now in place, is club-owned and will remain active for the life of the club! Hip! Hip! Hurrah!

Towards the middle of last month, the mailboxes at the Cazares and Kereluck residences were jumping with activity. Everyone contacted who had a direct connection with Pixel Print came through with flying colors! It seemed that just about every other day yeilded a cassette mailer, complete with tape and docs, all part of the desktop publishing mosaic. Recent public domain tapes were received on several occasions as a result of simple, mail-in inquiries! Steve Spaulding of STING Graphics, contributer to the Pixel Print "line", sent one along with an announcement program, a la Stan Lemke, for going public domain, as well. Believe it or not, there was a "bug" in the announcement program. This was noticed by Steve long before I did. To fix it, he sent another tape of just the fixed announcement code! You can't beat service like that.

While we couldn't duplicate the professional-quality laser printing normally provided by John Searce (except for the pre-made SWYM logo sheets -- thanks, John!), you will notice some interesting differences. Mainly, the graphics! This seems to an effective method for adding dimentions to a newsletter. Graphic contributions are welcome, too, because anyone can participate! All you need is Tech Draw or Tech Draw Jr. or Pixel Sketch and Graphics Editor or Artworks or any other 2068 graphics program that uses the SCREEN$ address. Add a dash of imagination or redraw an existing picture or diagram and upload that masterpiece to either Robert, myself or to the Timex Users Room on the Challenger BBS. Mailed cassettes are acceptable, as well. Since there's yet no club facility to scan a printed page, all artwork must be electronically stored and/or routed. That RLE stuff we've been talking about works here, also! Using Jack Dohany's program, load in your pix(plenty on Challenger), "invert" it and re-SAVE it as a SCREEN$. This, in turn, can be imported into a Pixel Print column! So, come on!

For those of you who were waiting for a schematic diagram of the 32K dock RAM card that's required for most version of Pixel Print Professional and whatever else you can think of, here's some news from the manufacurer, David Hildebrand: He states, oddly enough, that he has no formal diagram. The circuit is based on an article by John Oliger in Syncware News, Vol 3 No. 5. For those of you who saw the board during last month's meeting, you may have noticed John's name on it! Therefore, the Hildebrand board is a modified Oliger board. The mods are easy to pick out, since total parts count is so few. Derryk Turner thinks he has a that issue, so maybe we can finally get a schematic of the thing. When we do, we'll also see about reproducing it for you in SWYM and on Challenger.

CLUB MEMBER REPORTS: BY RC

DALE FRITZ mentioned that he has recieved the utility programs he ordered from the Capital Area Timex Sinclair User group. Unfortunatly, he was not able to load in any of the programs on the tapes that were sent to him. The tapes are on their way back to C.A.T.S. for replacement. The programs include graphics, character sets, and Spectrum programs.

GERRY DESMARAIS reports he has a 40K battery back-up RAM(NVM) expansion board which plugs into the parallel port of his T/S 1000. He says the ram can be split into two 16K Banks or one 32K Bank of external RAM. He mentioned something about the remaining 8K. I believe he said that the ROM can be switched into this 8K area. Yes, schematics are available for his expansion board. Hey Gerry, how about an article on what it's all about??????????

OTHER NEWSWORTHY NEWS:

There have been reports that TIME DESIGNS suscribers have been recieving the latest issue of this publication,volume 5 #1. This should have been the JAN/FEB issue. Also, UPDATE magazine is reported to have the summer issue off the presses and mailed to those who suscribe.

FOR PAUL NORMAN WHEREVER YOU ARE

SINCLAIR USE CORNER

BY: ROBERT CAZARES

It seems that Amstrad is still in the business of manufacturing the SPECTRUM computer. Advertised in the December issue of SINCLAIR USER, Amstrad is selling the ZX SPECTRUM+2 and ZX SPECTRUM+3. The ZX SPECTRUM+2 has a built in datacorder and sports 128K of memory. The ZX SPECTRUM+3 has a built-in disk drive(sorry, no specs on that) and also has 128K of memory. Offered in the package is a joystick and six software games titles. The +2 costs £139.00 and the +3 costs £199.00. These are available through MICROSNIPS LTD, 37 Seaveiw Road, Wallasey, Merseyside L45 9QN. FAX # 051-639 2714, 24 hour order # 051-630 3013.

Another British company offering peripherials is MGT DIRECT. Of interest in the hardware department is the VIDI-ZX DIGITISER. The digitiser capures images from any video camera or recorder and uses the PLUS D to store them to disk for editing later with a software program called ANIMATOR 1. It has shading, high resolution and no distortion. The PLUS D is a disk interface that snapshots all your SPECTRUM cassette software to disk in seconds. The printer interface prints out any screen. Works with 48K, 128K, or +2 SPECTRUM. Also works with +3 and +2A computer with The FIXER. The FIXER will convert a SPECTRUM +3, or +2A edge connector to the standard(wow, there are SINCLAIR standards?)SPECTRUM edge connector. The VIDI-ZX DIGITIZER sells for £30.39 + 15% VAT=£34.95, the PLUS D costs £52.13 + 15%VAT=£59.95, and the FIXER costs £7.87 + 15% VAT=£9.05. MGT DIRECT address is, Lackside, Phoenix Way, Swansea Enterprise Park, Swansea, SA7 9EH. Telephone:(0792) 791100. FAX:(0792)791175.

DATEL ELECTRONICS LTD, Fenton Industrial Estate, Govan Road, Fenton, Stoke-On-Trent, England, offers a program that AMIGA users will recognise. The ARTIST II offers pull down menus, windows icon driven, font and sprite designer, zoom mode, flexible cut and paste, and claims to support many printers. A mouse interface is offered as a package with ARTIST II. The cost is £49.00.

TASMAN SOFTWARE is still going strong. Among their software titles are, TASWORD, TASWORD PLUS TWO, TASWORD PLUS THREE, TAS-SPELL PLUS THREE(spell checker for TASWORD PLUS THREE), and the TASMAM PARELLEL PRINTER INTERFACE(software included for LLIST, LPRINT, and screen copy for most dot matrix printers. TASMAN SOFTWARE, DEPT SU, SPRINGFIELD HOUSE, HYDE TERRACE, LEEDS, LS2 9LN. Telephone: LEEDS (0532) 438301.

The SPECTRUM computer has become one of the most popular games machines in the United Kingdom. There are over 3000 games titles avalable for these machines at a significant price reduction over a games manufacturer such as Nintendo, whose games average in the $30.00 to $45.00 range.

Oh by the way SINCLAIR USER magazine is published at Priority Court, 30-32 Farrington Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. You can get this coloful and humerous mag through Curry Computer, P.O. Box 5607, Glendale, AZ. 85312. Phone:602-978-2902. SINCLAIR USER includes a cassette tape of full length games and playable demos of current arcade games. If you don't already suscribe, you don't know what your missing. I suggest going through Curry Computer, as they import them from ENGLAND for distribution in the good old U.S. of A.

NEXT MONTH: Screen saves of SPECTRUM graphics.
It's tea time and I really must be going.

TSMON

by Chuck Kerelucx

A popular modification for the TS1000 computer has been the direct video output circuit. There are various ways of doing this, with varying degrees of complexity. Basically it bypasses the RF modulator to yeild sharper, crisper displays.

Trouble is, a real, live "monitor" must now be purchased.

The easiest way around this dilemma is to go 'composite-monochrome.' All video and sync signals are multiplexed into a single wire. Leave it to the monitor's guts to sort them all out. By doing that, we are left with the simplest of interfaces to the computer: A single bipolar transistor stage. Figure 1 tells the story.

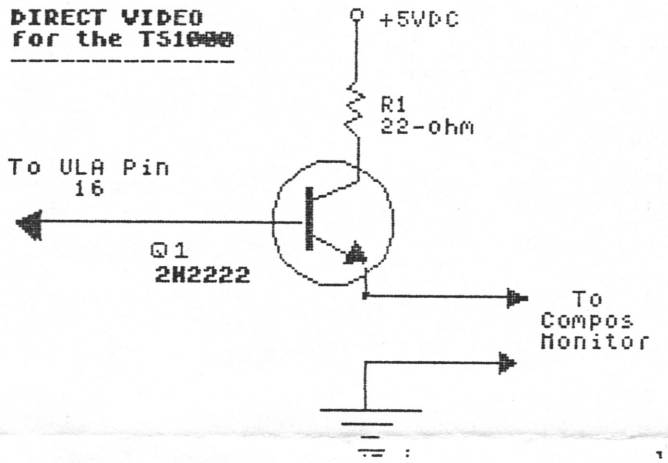

FIG 1

As you can see, all it takes is an NPN transistor and a single current-limiting resistor all available at your local Radio Shack. Other needed items include a phono jack, a short length of shielded cable or "twisted pair", solder, etc.

The easy parts consist of finding a suitable ground and +5VDC connections. The tricky part is to find the ULA chip connection to pin 16. Luckily, all these spots are huddled next to the modulator.

See the pictorial diagram of Fig. 2. This applies for both "ISSUE ONE" and "ISSUE THREE."

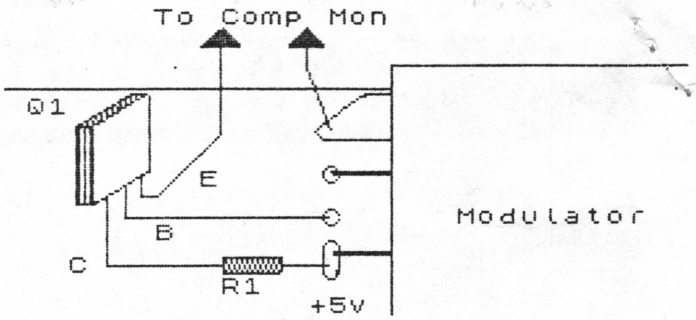

Fig 2

Any 2N2222 or eqivalent can be used here. Because of the fact that the "eqivalents" can have different TO- configurations, a strictly 'generic' drawing of Q1 has been provided, not conforming to any particular type. The heavy lines are those wires that connect the modulator into the computer. Please note that while there are three modulator wires, only the "top two" are being shown. This should help things when you try to match up the diagram with the real thing.

You may decide, as I have, to totally remove the modulator for a single, improved output. This idea came to me when mine bit the big one, one day. You can position a pc-mount phono jack right on a large foil area left vacant beneath the old unit. Or, if you prefer, leave it in and drive your monitor and a TV set at the same time! I opted for this on my other 1000 and it works great. Stereo video on the TS1000! Is there no end??

If you go this route, you'll need to run that short-length, small-diameter coax or "twisted-pair" from Q1 to a suitable connector outside the computer. Now you have to think about strain relief for the cable,so the ends don't twist off. When I got to this point,the decision was made to put everything in a brand new case with a brand new keyboard and all wild cables were taped down. Maybe you want to yank out that old modulator, after all.

By the way, this article was brought to you by Tech Draw Jr., Pixel Sketch and Graphics Editor and Pixel Print Plus! The TSMON schematic can be downloaded from the Challenger BBS under the file name,"tsmon" or "tsmon.cod"

It's basically a SCREEN$ file, so you can treat it as such. The second one has additional RLE encoding in it, however.

Have fun!